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C O N F I D E N T I A L BUCHAREST 000292

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STATE FOR EUR/NCE JENSEN AND FOR PM/WRA -- KATHERINE BAKER

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TAGS: [MOPS](#) [PARM](#) [PREL](#) [NATO](#) [IS](#) [RO](#)

SUBJECT: CLUSTER MUNITIONS BACK ON THE TABLE

REF: A. BUCHAREST 113

[1](#)B. STATE 6667

Classified By: Political Counselor Ted Tanoue for reasons 1.4(b) and (d).

[1](#)1. (C) MFA Director for Non-Proliferation, Arms Control, and Combating Terrorism Mihaela VasIU on March 9, cautioned POLMILOFF that Romania will revisit its decision not to associate the GOR with the Conference on Cluster Munitions. VasIU said that the GOR's decision to send a relatively low level representative (a working-level expert from the MOD's armaments division) to the February 22-23 Oslo meeting is being reassessed by the MFA following harsh criticism from other EU member states, especially the UK. VasIU also noted that both the MOD and MFA had been under the impression that the UK delegation would be led at Oslo by its MOD (note: the GOR felt the UK MOD was sympathetic to their position.). They subsequently learned that London made a switch to the FCO at the last minute.

[1](#)2. (C) VasIU explained that the earlier decision to send someone from the MOD was agreed principally because the MFA was unable to reach a policy consensus at the time. She observed that Romania's abstention from associating with the Oslo Conference's Final Declaration also can be attributed to outstanding MOD contract commitments on cluster munitions with Israel.

[1](#)3. (C) VasIU confirmed that the MFA is bowing to EU pressure, and is prepared to propose that Romania associate itself with the Conference on Cluster Munitions for the follow on meetings later this year. VasIU said the MFA and MOD have been tasked to draft separate position papers to present to the Inter-Ministry Commission later this month, where the two ministries can work out a joint recommendation for the GOR.

[1](#)4. (C) Comment: MFA interlocutors insist that the current political turmoil and the absence of a foreign minister is not affecting the conduct of foreign policy; everything is business as usual. However, one could make an argument that the MOD led by U.S.-friendly Minister Sorin Frunzaverde, who is more aligned to President Basescu, may have had the upper hand this time over an MFA that is being directed, de facto, by a State Secretary. The MFA is more EU-sensitive than the MOD as seen by the flip-flop on the Cluster Munitions policy. Without a large U.S. presence in Oslo, and with the news that the UK MOD would not have the lead on the issue, Romania may have felt uncomfortably exposed diplomatically, which triggered reevaluation of the policy. End Comment.
TAUBMAN